United Nations A/51/PV.95

General Assembly
Fifty-first Session

Official Records

95th plenary meeting
Thursday, 3 April 1997, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Razali ..... (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: This afternoon the General Assembly will consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 111, 113, 116; agenda items 116, 120, 137, 139 and 140 jointly; and agenda items 119, 120 and 165.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Ihor Humenny of Ukraine, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Humenny (Ukraine), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee on the first part of its resumed fifty-first session, held at United Nations Headquarters from 10 to 27 March 1997.

Concerning agenda item 111, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/51/849. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.47, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 113, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/51/846. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft decision A/C.5/51/L.51, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 116, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997", the reports of the Committee are contained in documents A/51/750/Add.1, dealing with travel and related expenses and the eighth progress report on the Integrated Management Information System project; and A/51/848, dealing with gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities, which was also submitted under agenda items 120, 137, 139 and 140. In paragraph 10 of the report of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/51/750/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft decisions A/C.5/51/L.44 and A/C.5/51/L.55. Both draft decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote. In paragraph 6 of the report of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/51/848, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft decision A/C.5/51/L.52, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 119, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/51/747/Add.1. In paragraph 11 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.56, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 120, entitled "Human resources management", the report of the Fifth Committee

97-85343 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

is contained in document A/51/643/Add.2. In paragraph 10 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.49, which deals with personnel matters in general; and draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.54, which concerns respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations. Both draft resolutions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In connection with draft resolution I, on personnel matters in general, I wish to draw the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 26 of section III (B), the second part of which should read as follows:

> "... and also requests that persons on short-term appointments filling regular budget posts or extrabudgetary posts of one year or more cannot apply for or be appointed to their current post within six months of the end of their current service".

This correction is necessary in order to bring the paragraph into line with the agreement reached during informal consultations.

Finally, with regard to agenda item 165, entitled "Financing of the Military Observer Group of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/51/844. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.48, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 111

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/849)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 51/225).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 111.

Agenda item 113

Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/846)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 113?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 116

Programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/51/750/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 10 of part II of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I, entitled "Eighth progress report on the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) project", without a vote. May I consider that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Travel and related expenses".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I consider that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda items 116, 120 and 137 (continued) and agenda items 139 and 140

Programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

Human resources management

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/848)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities", without a vote. May I consider that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116, 120, 137, 139 and 140.

Agenda item 119 *(continued)*

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/51/747/Add.1)

The President: I call on the representative of the Marshall Islands, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution contained in the report of the Fifth Committee.

Mr. Edwards (Marshall Islands): I wish to address the issue of the scale of assessments and the draft resolution (A/C.5/51/L.56) before us, which was adopted last Thursday night by the Fifth Committee. It was not possible for my delegation to receive instructions on this matter at the final hour, and we therefore could not make

our views known. I refer in particular to paragraph 1 (a) of the draft resolution, which calls for the inclusion of a proposal based on the methodology used for the scale of assessments for the period 1995-1997.

In the view of my delegation, this is an unacceptable inclusion. It means in practice that we leave open the possibility that all the hard work of the Fifth Committee could come to nothing in the fall of this year. It means that the fragile consensus that had been reached on a number of the issues discussed is effectively being ignored. In our view, those delegations that may have insisted on this inclusion are causing delegations such as mine a great deal of difficulty, which could have serious consequences for our work and cooperation.

My delegation is very unhappy about this state of affairs. Our preference has always been to move our work forward in this field, not backwards, and we would have liked to see this particular paragraph deleted. If this is not possible, we would like to have these brief comments put on record: that we do not accept the possibility of returning to the status quo of the current scale. We will resist such an outcome when the matter comes up again during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position before action is taken.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 11 of part II of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 51/212 B).

The President: I call on the representative of Mexico, who wishes to make a statement in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Ms. Peña (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The complicated formula that was used so that consensus could be reached on the resolution we have just adopted was the high price that the Member States decided to pay for consensus at this stage of the negotiations to establish the scale of assessments for the next triennium. For the first time, the Committee on Contributions was requested to submit various proposals for the scale instead of a single proposal.

My delegation would like to state for the record that the practice established in resolution 41/213, whereby the General Assembly should adopt budgetary decisions with the broadest possible agreement, does not prejudice or preclude the right of Member States, in accordance with the Charter and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to submit draft resolutions. Indeed, such drafts help identify areas of possible agreement and move the negotiating process forward.

For this reason, and out of our belief that the present financial situation of the United Nations is not related to the scale of assessments, my delegation submitted draft resolution A/C.5/51/L.21. That draft was an important demonstration of the Mexican delegation's flexibility on the elements to be included in the methodology to be used for the next triennium. In our view, it contains elements enjoying broad agreement among the membership of the Organization.

The content of that draft was incorporated in the resolution we have just adopted. My delegation trusts that this resolution will enable us to find and agree on a satisfactory solution on this item.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 119.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part III) (A/51/643/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 10 of part III of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "Human resources management". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 51/226).

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the

specialized agencies and related organizations". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 51/227).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 120.

Agenda item 165

Financing of the Military Observer Group of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/844)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 51/228).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 165.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.